DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 232 829 RC 014 246

AUTHOR	O'Gorman, Frances
TITLE	Roles of Change Agents in Development. Occasional Paper #3.
INSTITUTION	Michigan State Univ., East Lansing. Non-Formal Education Information Center.
SPONS AGENCY	Agency for International Development (IDCA), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	78
NOTE	21p.
AVAILABLE FROM	NFE Information Center, Michigan State University, 237 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824 (while supply lasts).
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (120)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Agency Role; Attitude Change; *Change Agents; Change Strategies; Community Change; *Community Development; Economic Development; Professional Training; *Role Perception; *Social Change; Social Influences; Social Theories; Work Attitudes

ABSTRACT

The roles of change agents in community development are manifest (surface actions of agents interacting with clients) and latent (derived from undercurrents that give directions to the agents' actions). Manifest roles are as starter (facilitator, analyzer, leadership developer); go-between (informer, linker); and accomplisher (organizer, evaluator, administrator of sanctions). Assumptions underlying manifest roles are: the change process is goal directed; alleviation of problems/needs will bring benefits of society to local groups; change agents can foster belief in improvement; change equals development, interpreted as modernization and progress. An emerging human-centered paradigm of development, with economic growth no longer the primary/exclusive goal, questions these assumptions. Manifest roles incorporate the latent roles, which may differ, depending on the agent's view of development. As facilitator, the agent may be alienator or de-alienator; as leadership developer, either mobilizer or consciousness raiser; as analyzer, either dichotomizer or history builder; as informer, either manipulator or sharer; as linker, either modernizer or syncretizer; as organizer, either efficiency promotor or supporter of popular participation; as administrator of sanctions, either liberator from power structures or adjuster to dominant systems; as evaluator, either quantifier or qualifier. Training of change agents should foster awareness of latent as well as manifest roles. (MH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED232829

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

OCCASIONAL PAPER #3

Roles of Change Agents in Development

Frances O'Gorman

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INFORMATION CENTER
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN 48824

RC014246

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mary Joy Pigozzi

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

OCCASIONAL PAPER #3

Roles of Change Agents in Development

Frances O'Gorman

1978

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INFORMATION CENTER

Institute for International Studies in Education

513 Erickson Hall

College of Education, Michigan State University

East Lansing, Michigan 48824, USA

(517) 355-5522

INTRODUCTION

Through its series of Occasional Papers, the NFE Information Center seeks to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among those pioneering in the practice of non-formal education. In dynamic, relatively young fields of inquiry and experimentation it is especially important to bring budding "ideas in progress" to the light of public scrutiny. We intend the papers in this series to provoke critical discussion and to contribute to the generation of knowledge about non-formal education.

Frances O'Gorman writes from the richness of long experience living among communities of economically disadvantaged people in her country of Brazil. In this paper, she calls our attention to the ways in which the manifest and latent roles of change agents may reflect very different views of development. She examines these roles and postulates that a position of neutrality is not possible for a change agent. In conclusion, Ms. O'Gorman draws some important and far-reaching implications for the training of change agents.

We invite your participation in this dialogue and welcome your comments.

Joan M. Claffey
Director
Non-Formal Education Information
Center

This series of Occasional Papers is published by the Non-Formal Education Information Center in cooperation with the Agency for International Development. The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the NFE Information Center or AID.

Roles of Change Agents in Development

Frances O'Gorman

Change agents in development carry out a large number of basic functions, yet change agents themselves are not always aware of the implications of their roles. In this paper, two aspects of roles will be considered: *manifest roles*, which are the surface actions of the agent in interacting with clients, and *latent roles*, which are derived from the underlying currents that give direction to the change agent's action.

A role is a socially recognized pattern of behavior within accepted boundaries in determined situations. Roles imply that the actions and the qualities associated with the position are stable even though different people occupy them. The same person can perform different roles in varying degrees of social importance. By changing actions and qualities in the same set of circumstances, roles also can become conflicting.

A change agent, as broadly conceived, is a person whose primary role is to achieve a transformation in attitudes, behavior, and social organization. The intent is to improve social and economic conditions. In community development, change agents work through general role patterns. Specialized change agents concentrate in a determined area of social interaction, such as health or agriculture. The concept of change agent in this paper will draw from the North American model. It has been widely used, with adaptations, in many developing countries.

Community based change agents usually are temporary or permanent residents in the locality of action or are closely related to it, linked to the area by the job to be done but not always with the same

historical or other commitments as the residents toward whom change is directed. Ordinarily, change agents do not function in isolation or exclusively with their target audiences; change agent roots usually are in an organization or agency. The purpose of community based change agent interaction is transformation, although the agent himself or herself may not assume all dimensions of that transformation.

Closely related to the community change agent is the agent of diffusion of innovations, whose aim is to change people's manner of doing things in order to upgrade quality of life in specific ways. Innovations are introduced within a broad community context but do not necessarily arise from a locally determined need.

Community development is a very imprecise term for a variety of activities. Gessaman[1] has summarized some of the thinking about community development, including the concepts of Sanders, Biddle and Biddle, Cary, Littrell, and Warren. This summary suggests that development could be viewed from four perspectives: as a method, a program, a movement, or a process. The first three involve goals and procedures decided outside the area of local action and which are implemented as a cause or crusade introduced into the area. Community development as a process, however, presupposes doing what the community wants, with the change agent acting primarily as the catalyst in the process. In this view, goals are directed to alleviate some problem and the procedures are logical and sequential, involving tried techniques and democratic participation.

In community development as a process, the core of the change agent's action revolves around three concepts in the process: the *"ought"* or identification of ideals, issues, and problems; the *"can be"* or identification and utilization of resources, leadership, and organizatcn in selecting viable alternatives; and the *"shall be"* or action dimension

1. Paul H. Gessaman, "What is Community Development?" in Community Development: An Intensive Training Manual, Laury R. Whiting, Bill J. Kimball, Manfred Thullen, and Lois L. Mann, Eds. Ames, Iowa: North Central Regional for Rural Development. 1978.

in which priorities are established and decisions, plans, implementation, and evaluation are made in order to bring the selected alternative to a successful completion.

Manifest Roles of Change Agents

Manifest roles are consciously prepared for and are evident to agents and clients within the development process. Drawing from Gessaman's systematization of the diverse roles of the American agent in extension service, one may look at the manifest roles of change agents in three perspectives: as *starter*, as *go-between*, and as *accomplisher*.

Starter Roles

As *starter*, the change agent's roles include those of a facilitator, analyzer, and leadership developer. The facilitator is the motivator or stimulator who takes the initiative to identify community issues and ideals in order to get people going by creating a situation for effective action and to provide influence in terms of advice. The analyzer is the identifier of alternatives raised by the community or the provider of expert input for analyzing the community as a whole. The leadership developer has the functions of identifying, organizing, training, and increasing the capabilities of local leaders and ascertaining their status in the community as a form of continuity of the process of development.

Go-between Roles

As *go-between*, the change agent's roles are those of an informer and a linker. The informer is one who introduces facts, contacts resource persons, provides educational or instructional material, conducts studies, and brings technical know-how to the locality at the right moment. A linker serves as a bridge between the community and specialists, social systems, organizations, policy makers, and enforcers.

Accomplisher Roles

As *accomplisher*, the change agent's roles are as organizer, evaluator, and administrator of sanctions. The organizer gets things done, programs meetings, and sets the context of the development process. The evaluator provides a basis for the evaluation of alternatives through a broader knowledge, along with evaluating the actual process in terms of objectives determined by the community and the outcomes achieved. The administrator of sanctions rewards the level of performance.

There are, then, at least three major manifest roles, surface actions of the change agent in interacting with clients: starter, go-between, and accomplisher roles. Within each of these are further roles often beginning with that of facilitator and ranging through leadership developer, linker, and administrator of sanctions.

Assumptions Underlying Manifest Roles of Change Agents

While there is a vast variety of manifest roles for change agents, there are certain assumptions underlying almost all of them.

Change agent roles frequently assume certain values of a democratic society. The actual change process is goal directed, following sequential steps with predictable outcomes, voluntary participation, the use of analytic techniques, formal groupings with open entry, and activities reflecting the preferences of the participants.

Assumptions about the relationship of the local group to society are geared toward the alleviation of problems or needs in order to attain the benefits of society. Basic social values commonly accepted by agents and clients guide perceptions of the community situation vis-à-vis society.

Manifest roles also assume that the change agent can foster a belief in the minds of people toward improvement. The agent's agency gives

assistance and support. The more successful the delivery of services, the greater credibility and acceptability the agency will have. Tangible outcomes are important for the agent. Since agencies need political support, controversy and criticism are to be kept at minimum levels.

Change often is assumed to equal development, which, in turn, is interpreted as modernization and progress. Society is seen as a stasis, a form of permanence that is to be attained by those outside it. People are to be changed to better relate to existing social structures. Concepts of social development are permeated by the values of industrialization, technocracy, and capitalist economics. Change agent roles are to be used to obtain better participation in the forms of development evidenced in the more advanced sectors of society.

Manifest roles are never isolated because they are social. They have implications in a series of latent roles pertaining to change and development. To clarify some of the latent roles, it is necessary to look at the commonly held views of development.

Concepts of Development

Traditional concepts

Historically, the concept of development has been related to industrialization. This is the model that still predominates. Social scientists like Lerner, Rostow, and McClelland have emphasized growth, literacy, irreversible change processes, and Gross National Product (GNP). Parsons introduced the stages of modernization. Structural functionalists such as Durkheim, Pareto, and Malinowski looked to social harmony for stability in development.

In the traditional view, development is a "trickle-down" process, gradual and piecemeal to a large extent. This view stresses a linear model of engineering behavior to persuade and facilitate modernization. Modernization is linked to industry, colonization, urbanization, and

economic growth. It looks to capital intensive technology and diffusion of innovations in packaged programs and induced changes. Agents transmit the content of development; the clients learn to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps". Per capita income is the magic measure. Traditional ways must be changed because they are obstacles to modernization. Efficiency is the password, and this requires centralization of decision and planning. The causes of underdevelopment are considered to be internal, rooted in what is perceived to be fatalism, ignorance, and the results of inadequate nutrition. Established social order is the desirable one, and development means conformity and participation in it.

Changing Values

The traditional view of development has been challenged in the past decade by social scientists who are questioning the structures and the concepts of social transformation. Eisenstadt, for example, has challenged the dichotomy of development versus underdevelopment. Progress and modernization are being considered ethnocentric "growthmania". Experts in the area of innovations, including Rogers, Whiting, Beltrán, Diaz Bordenave, and Schramm, point out that rural development is really widening the socio-economic gap between the rich and the poor. Many contend there are contextual influences that are stronger determinants of quality of life than those advocated by change agents of the traditional school. Gunder Frank has highlighted the dependency theory and questioned the ahistoricity of traditional development. Increasingly it can be seen that there is a whole complex interrelationship of social structures, political and economic power, that determine development, and that neither stasis nor change are values in themselves.

Among the anthropologists, development also is being questioned. Foster, Thompson, Valentine, and others are re-thinking the role of anthropologist as supporter of the change agent's need to understand the client in order to achieve more efficient change. Stavenhagen insists that social science can never be neutral and is serving the political

and ideological values of the dominant system rather than the values of development. He points out that change agents should be working with the elite, not the underdog.

The Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in 1973 brought a sharp emphasis on quality of life, and the Club of Rome Conferences have begun the redefining of underdevelopment.

Added to the trend of criticising the traditional view of development and searching for new meanings, is the ecology trend that steers development totally away from the concept of growth. There are writers such as Barbara Ward, who talks about the "violent misuse of life support systems". Jacques Ellul, Heilbroner, Commoner, and others have pointed out the dangers of technocracy. Fritsch has spoken of the need of becoming contrasumers. Shared wealth, halting population growth, steady state economy, moderation, and gradualism are aspects of a new version of development according to Ophuls, Asimov, Scitovsky, Schumacher, and others.

Emerging Concepts of Development

Development is beginning to take on a new meaning among the lesser industrialized countries. Man is seen as the center of development and economic growth no longer is seen as the primary or exclusive goal.

Development is not an irreversible process of modernization, with elimination of the old and adoption of the new the only possible outcomes. Development is becoming a series of processes with a common core. There are now many models of development rooted in the historical reality of each place and each people. This trend is less one of breaking with tradition than one of choice as to what should be integrated into the development pattern. Different cultures have their unique subsystems which result in different models of development. Change is interwoven with the structure of the whole society. It involves a wider social transformation, political action, and recognition of impinging forces,

especially international and economic restraints.

Men and women are the participators in deciding development, not merely the executors of it. Equality of distribution, concern for quality of life, labor intensive technology, integration of the old and new, self reliance, popular participation, decentralization, potential local resources, a sense of collective belonging all are characteristics of a development that is emerging from a pluralism of experiences. Humankind's control over money and goods is no longer the central issue. The issues now are peoples' control of their own environment, political destinies, lives, and values.

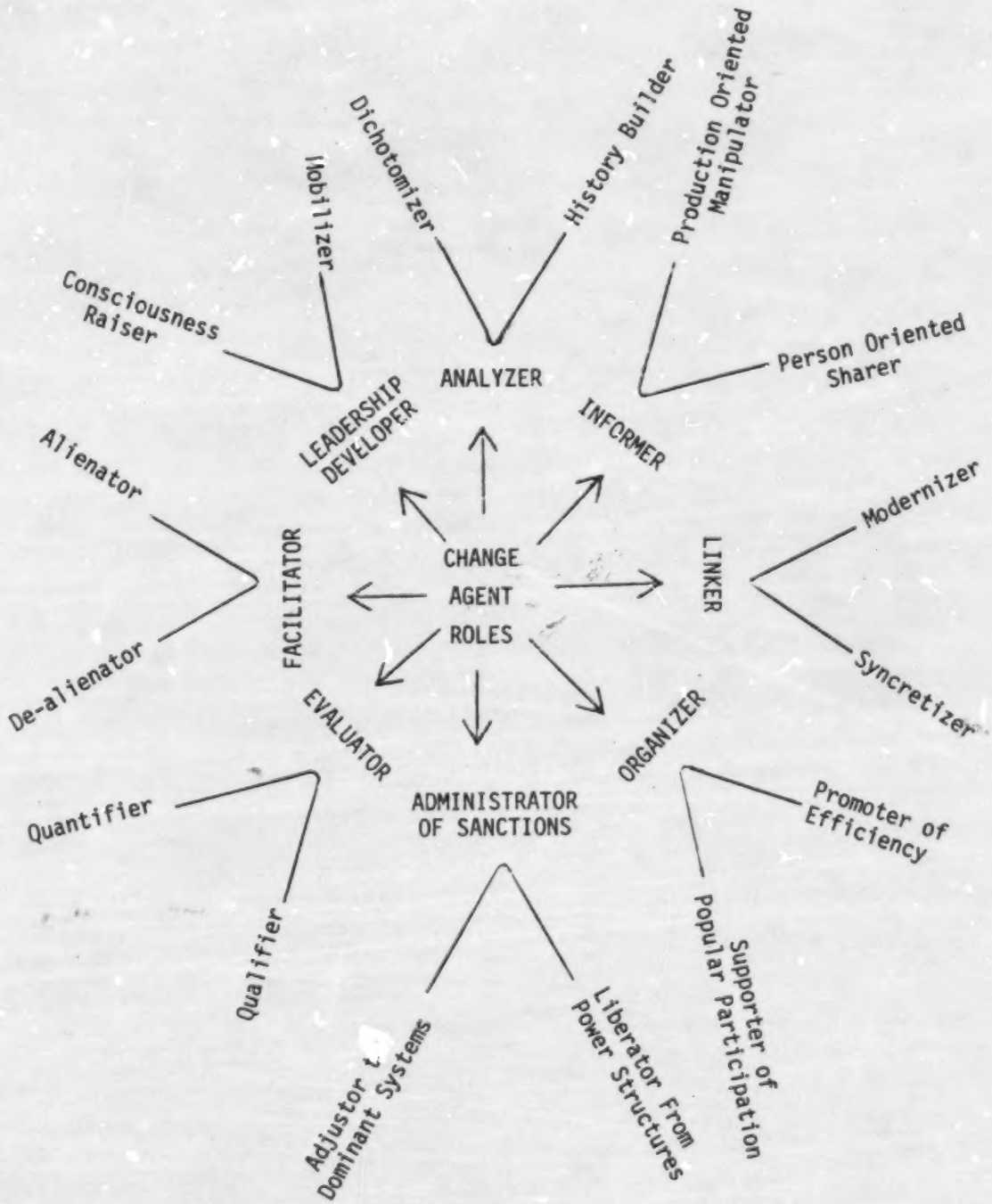
There is no clear cut concept of development today, as traditional and emerging views overlap and conflict simultaneously and as transition becomes the norm of social development. This raises the question of "change for what?" in the roles of change agents. The manifest roles carry with them the latent roles which are implicit in the paradigm of development that is emerging.

Latent Roles of Change Agents in Development

In examining the manifest roles of change agents in communities, one often can identify divergent, almost dichotomous, latent roles. The nature of these roles may differ, depending upon the view of development that is orienting the agent's intervention. The diagram on page 9 attempts to depict these roles graphically.

Latent Facilitator Roles

As *facilitator*, the change agent may be either an alienator or de-alienator. The alienator is one who promotes centralized decision, along with top-down development with the receiver culture submerged in a donor culture of modernization. As de-alienator, the facilitator builds up values of socio-cultural systems in the locality. He or she seeks to


CHANGE AGENT ROLES
ANALYZER
Dichotomizer
History Builder
Jobilizer
Consciousness Raiser
INFORMER
Production Oriented Manipulator
Person Oriented Sharer
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPER
FACILITATOR
Alienator
De-alienator
LINKER
Modernizer
Syncretizer
EVALUATOR
Quantifier
Qualifier
ORGANIZER
Promoter of Efficiency
Supporter of Popular Participation
ADMINISTRATOR OF SANCTIONS
Adjustor to Dominant Systems
Liberator From Power Structures

regenerate values lost in economic exploitation, liberate people from societal superstructures that dehumanize, and help participants feel at home in the process of development. A collective spirit is built on individual interests, identity, creativity, price, and values.

Latent Leadership Developer Roles

As *leadership developer*, the change agent could perform the roles of mobilizer or consciousness raiser. The mobilizer works toward a status quo society and toward installation which reifies the individual, making him or her an object in the mechanisms of modernization. A consciousness raiser role involves decreasing the consciousness gap between the leaders and the people, fostering a teaching-learning society, and building values through relationships.

Latent Analyzer Roles

As an *analyzer*, the change agent's role could include being a history builder or a dichotomizer. The dichotomizer sharpens the distinction between development and underdevelopment, allows for the dominance of a minority group over the mass of people, and sees modernization as an irreversible stage sequence. The history builder works toward a pluralism of paths and alternative process in development and works toward an integrative development rooted in the people being subjects of their own history.

Latent Informer Roles

As *informer*, the change agent may carry out the roles of either person oriented sharer or production oriented manipulator. The manipulator tends toward consumerism, the unidimensiality of capitalism, unlimited consumption and production, and emergence of consumer classes. As sharer, the role is one of furthering contrasumerism, stressing the multidimensionality of each human being, and emphasizing rational consumption and equalitarian income distribution.

Latent Linker Roles

As a *linker*, the change agent could be either syncretizer or modernizer. The modernizer's role seeks the values of industrialism through impositional means. The syncretizer brings the old and new together through a multivariate development centered on self reliance.

Latent Organizer Roles

As *organizer*, the roles might be supporter of popular participation or promoter of efficiency. The role of efficiency promoter stresses organization for production, capital intensive technology, and benefits for corporations. In the role of supporting popular participation, the stress is more likely to be on labor intensive technology, working for the benefit of individuals within social systems.

Latent Administrator of Sanctions Roles

As *administrator of sanctions*, conflicting roles could be those of adjuster to the dominant systems or liberator from power structures. In the role of liberator from power structures, the change agent promotes power wielding leadership, while the role of adjustor to the dominant systems involves placing a limitation on the sovereignty of leadership and curtailing satellite dependency.

Latent Evaluator Roles

As *evaluator*, the roles may be either qualifier or quantifier. The quantifier looks at development in terms of having, of growth and measurable achievements. For the qualifier, economic growth is subordinated to the development of mankind, with utmost importance given to being and to equality.

The Relationship of Manifest and Latent Roles

Latent roles are present in manifest roles by virtue of the model of development that is followed, explicitly or implicitly, by the change agent in his or her role of "changer."

Latent roles, however, are not always the extremes that have been exemplified above. There are degrees and variations in the roles, just as there are differences in the trends of traditional and emerging development concepts. Latent roles can swing from one trend to another, sometimes conflicting with the manifest roles and other times complementing them. When the differences lie in the means to obtain change for development, the roles can complement each other. Nevertheless, this kind of oscillation would indicate that the view of development is, in itself, somewhat contradictory.

Implications for the Training of Change Agents

The role of the change agent continues to be valid within the changing views of development. The change agent, in fact, bridges the gap between traditional and emerging paradigms of development. The training of change agents continues to depend totally on the philosophy and ideology of his of her agency. Training responsibilities, thus, begin with the staff of the agent's parent agency.

In examining the manifest and latent roles of change agents, an initial conclusion is that change agents increasingly must be freed from their provincialisms and from their tunneled vision of social development. Questions should be raised. *What is change? What is the purpose of change? Why should there be change? What are change agents, agents of and for whom?* It is important to clarify the assumptions underlying the models of community development and explicate the agency's concept of development, not only within local and national development but considering the international significance of it. A critical awareness should be cultivated among change agents to perceive areas of social interdependency.

Agents must be able to recognize their position as influencers of change. Once recognizing it, they need to be able to relate it to other positions, even opposite ones, and see what change means in a wider dimension without losing their own perspective and frame of reference.

In training agents, the tendency has been to develop techniques, skills, and roles for immediate application. What should be introduced is an understanding of the mechanisms and forces of social systems, a comprehension of society, of socio-political and cultural-anthropological dimensions of man, so that the agent has tools to think beyond the pragmatism of a job to be done and an outcome to be achieved. The agent cannot help the client think "beyond" in terms of development if he or she has not had the experience of that further reality.

Change agents, while clarifying their own values which determine the roles they will perform, need to be able to cope with and reconcile different values, including their personal ones, those of the local community, those of the agency, and those values submerged in the models of development of which they are change agents. The agent needs to make judgments about values in terms of the community, being secure in placing priorities and yet open to questioning. There is no such thing as a "role of neutrality" for change agents. The procedures of community development are related to a context of which the agent must become aware.

The entire question of training change agents should be re-evaluated. One can be trained in the "how to" of carrying out manifest roles as agents of change, but critical perception of social reality comes from being immersed in the experience of it. For change agents not to become robots, training should include a continual dialogue with each other and with the thinkers and questioners of the social sciences.

While being presented with manifest roles, the change agent should be able to discern the latent roles. A powerful and meaningful procedure for discerning latent roles is to reflect on actual situations, analyze

them, and see them in relationship to concepts of change, progress, modernization, and development. The client communities are probably far more aware of latent roles than agents would ever imagine.

Any definition of roles becomes an artificiality because of the subtle complexities of social relationships. This is evident in the above division between latent and manifest roles, as well as between opposing trends of latent roles. The antithetical roles should not be seen as opposites but as indications of directions. Change agent roles can be a dialectical movement between patterns of behavior that are socially acceptable for different developmental concerns. Paradigms are always static. There is not just one or two ways of being a change agent for development. Consequently, the training of change agents should be more of an educational awareness of society and, above all, of the values implicit in human fulfillment.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Communication Research. Vol. 3, No. 2, April 1976. This issue, edited by Everett M. Rogers, is devoted to perspectives of communication and development. Assessments of the dominant paradigms of development open the way for emerging alternatives and for evaluation of the function of diffusion of innovations.

Development Dialogue. 1977:2; a journal of international development published by the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, Uppsala, Sweden. This issue deals with a theory of rural development in which the philosophy and objectives of development are reconsidered, with emphasis on the individual and the collective, the aspirations frontier, self-reliance, participatory democracy, consciousness gap, and de-alienation.

Traditional Societies and Technological Change by George M. Foster. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973. The author emphasizes the need for problem solving rather than program approaches, along with better understanding of ourselves as social, cultural, and psychological beings, and better knowledge of the basic characteristics of socio-cultural systems related to change processes.

The Contrasumer: A Citizen's Guide to Resource Conservation by Albert J. Fritsch. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. The author points out elements of the world crisis due to habits of over-consumption and offers suggestions for conserving energy and materials on individual, community, national, and international levels.

An Inquiry Into the Human Prospect by Robert L. Heilbroner. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1975. The global predicament of man today requires a new look at industrial technology and the logical dynamics of socio-economic reasoning.

Great Plains Community Development Leaflets. Great Plains Extension-5 Committee, 1977.
"Definition of Community Development" by George Abshier.
"Community Development Process" by Galen Kelsey.
"Roles in Community Development" by Paul H. Gessaman.
"Tools and Techniques Available for Community Development Work" by Donald B. Erickson and Wayne W. Owens.

"The Revolution of Being" by Gustavo Lagos in On the Creation of a Just World Order, ed. by Saul H. Mendlovitz. New York: The Free Press, 1975. The failure of the revolution of "having" is reviewed, giving roots to a revolution of "being".

Communication and Change: Ten Years After by Wilbur Schramm and D. Lerner, eds. Honolulu: University of Hawaii/East-West Center, 1976. Two sections of special interest to the changing view of modernization

and development paradigms are "The Changing Vision of Modernization and Development" by S. N. Eisenstadt and "End of an Old Paradigm?" by Wilbur Schramm.

"Decolonizing Applied Social Sciences" by Rodolfo Stavenhaven in Human Organization. Vol. 30, No. 4, Winter 1971. The applied social scientist cannot be neutral, according to the author, to the larger political and ideological issues which determine the framework of of his professional practice.

"An Appropriate Role for Post-Colonial Applied Anthropologists" by Laura Thompson in Human Organization. Vo. 35, No.1, Spring 1976. Suggestions for a clear cut clinical role for the anthropologist in helping client groups know themselves.

Alienation and Economics by Walter A. Weisskopf. New York: Dell Publishing Company, Inc., 1971. A focus on changing philosophical and psychological assumptions about man as an economic being leading to a view of man as an ecosystem striving for balance within himself and with his environment.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frances O'Gorman was born in Canada and now is a naturalized citizen of Brazil. She received her B. A. degree in 1970 from Madonna College in Michigan with a major in sociology and social welfare. Her M. A. degree was received from Michigan State University in 1975 with a major in education and special training in non-formal education. Currently she is a doctoral candidate in non-formal education curriculum at MSU.

Ms. O'Gorman has been a primary and secondary teacher in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, a teacher at a language institute in Sao Paulo, and a vocational guidance director and lecturer on socio-cultural aspects of Brazilian reality for non-Brazilians.

Currently she is a values education consultant with the NUCLAR program of FASE (Federation of Organizations for Social and Educational Assistance). Her work involves working with agent/educators and community leadership groups in urban and semi-rural areas of Brazil. She has written several articles on the relationship of educational and cultural values to development.